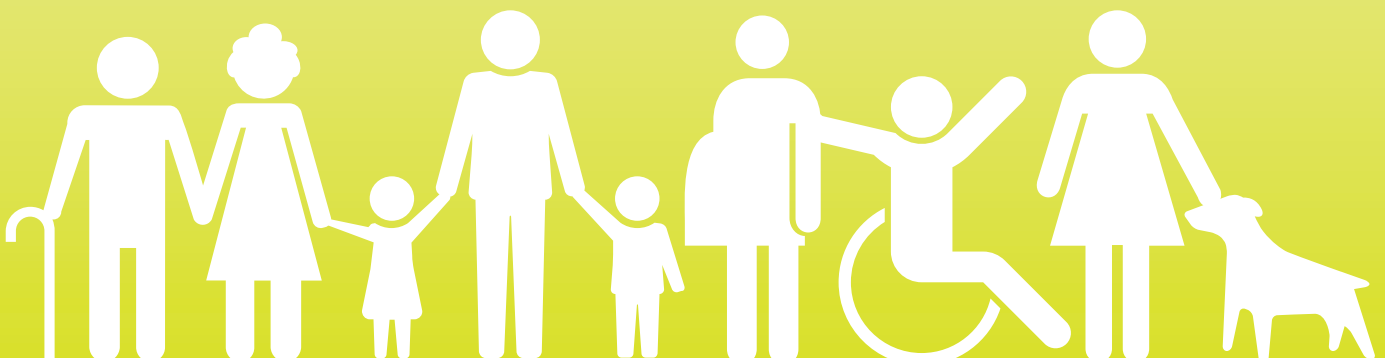
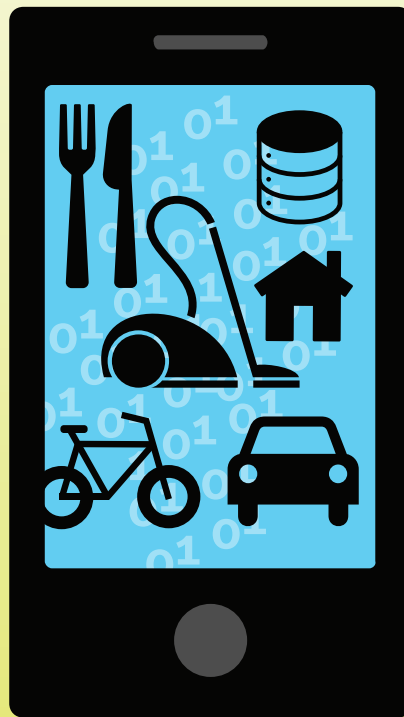


# PLATFORM CO-OPs

We connect cooperatives with  
the digital economy



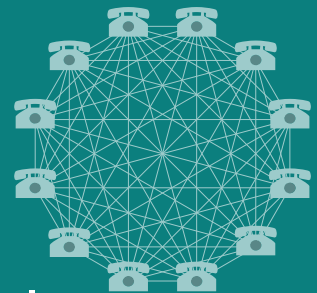
# We need alternative economic models because the economy powering the Internet is not working

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**x** **Inequality** In 2015, the 62 richest people in the world controlled \$1.76 trillion: the cumulative worth of 3.5 billion people. Women and people of color are disproportionately affected by this trend.



**x** **Concentration** Network effects lead to top-down control of platforms, weakening competition and the potential for consumer alternatives.





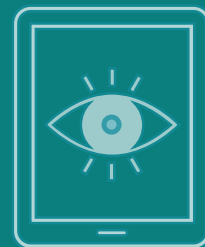
## **Workplace Democracy**

While political democracy has spread in many countries, workplace democracy has not.



## **Invasion of Privacy**

In the EU alone, the market for personal data will reach \$1 trillion by 2020, encouraging commercial surveillance and privacy breaches.



## **The Smokescreen of Counterculture**

Terms like “sharing” and “community” are used to sell commercial services and lend out assets. Labor companies pass themselves off as tech companies.





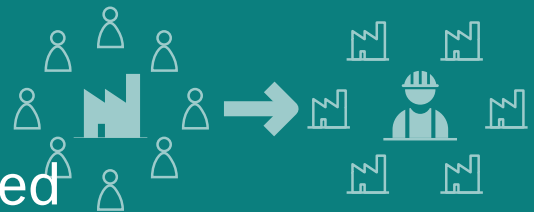
## Stalled Worker Rights

Independent contractors lose rights guaranteed under the Fair Labor Standards Act. They are not covered by unemployment insurance.



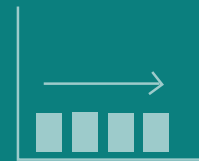
## Shift Away from Direct Employment

1 in 3 Americans is a freelancer. 40% of the US workforce is expected to be freelancers by 2020.



## Stagnating Wages

Over the past 40 years, wages for most American workers have not risen, when adjusted for inflation.



## Crowd Fleecing

Online labor brokerages enable wage theft, discrimination, and exploitation.



# We can build on a powerful business model that works—it's hidden around us in plain sight

- 1 in 3 Americans is a co-op member.
- In the U.S., co-ops created close to 1 million jobs with \$25 billion in wages and benefits.
- The total co-op revenue in the U.S. is \$500 billion.
- Cooperative enterprises worldwide employ 250 million people and generate \$2.2 trillion in revenue.



# Imagine a digital economy that would follow the 7 co-operative principles

- 1.** Voluntary and Open Membership
- 2.** Democratic Member Control
- 3.** Member Economic Participation
- 4.** Autonomy and Independence
- 5.** Education, Training, and Information
- 6.** Cooperation among Cooperatives
- 7.** Concern for Community



# Benefits of the platform co-op model

## PLATFORM CO-OPS RESPOND TO THE MARKET FAILURES OF THE ONLINE ECONOMY

✓ Lower transaction and retention costs



✓ Surplus revenues of co-ops are transferred to the members



✓ 80% of co-ops survive their first five years compared with 41% of other business ownership models



✓ Money flows within local communities



✓ Protection from exploitation through ownership, transparency, control



✓ Higher commitment of users disincentivizes short-termism



✓ Prospect of data democracy



# 4 examples of platform co-ops



**WHO:** Stocksy United [stocksy.com](https://stocksy.com)

**WHERE:** Victoria, BC, Canada

**WHEN:** launched 2013

**WHAT:** high-quality, curated stock photography and video footage, raising the bar—and the industry's expectations—of stock photography and cinematography, 960 photographers in 63 countries

**2015:** ■ \$7.9m in sales, \$200,000 in dividends to workers ■ Skills training for photographers to increase value of product ■ Uses 5% of revenue to operate the platform ■ Have serviced 124 of Fortune 500 companies

**2016:** ■ \$10.7m in sales, \$300,000 in dividends





**WHO:** Green Taxi Co-op  
[greentaxicooperative.com](http://greentaxicooperative.com)

**WHERE:** Denver, Colorado  
Metro Area

**WHEN:** launched in 2015

**WHAT:**

- Mobile app ride-hailing  
800 members, immigrants from  
37 countries
- \$2,000 from each driver for  
startup costs
- Communication Workers  
of America Local 7777 helped  
clear regulatory hurdles (and  
leased a basement office to  
Green Taxi Cooperative)
- Captured over  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the  
Denver market

# res( )nate

**WHO:** Resonate  
resonate.is

**WHAT:**

- Stream-to-own model driven by blockchain technology
- Multistakeholder cooperative giving stakeholders democratic control: Artists (45%), Listeners (35%), Employees (20%)
- Pays up to 2.5 times more than other streaming services

# MIDATA

**WHO:** MIDATA

MiData.coop

**WHERE:** Zurich, Switzerland

**WHAT:** Health data cooperative

- Members upload their medical records, mobile-health data, and personal genome and can then decide to securely share with: physicians, family, researchers
- Apps-economy allows patients to make use of their data
- Profits are generated from voluntary sale of data to researchers
- Aims for an international federation of cooperatives with the goal of creating a cooperative data commons

# ... and there is so much more in the platform co-op ecosystem

## JOURNALISM

banyanproject

Newscoop  
SOURCEFABRIC

★Morning Star

taz.

il manifesto  
quotidiano comunista

WOZ  
DIE WOCHENZEITUNG

Positive News

LaJornada en línea

## TRANSPORTATION

green Taxi  
cooperative

YELLOW

ridygo

PARTAGO

COTABO  
IL PRIMO TAXI DI BOLOGNA



CO-OP  
TAXI LINE

tapazz

modo.

## SHORT-TERM RENTAL

HH

fairbnb  
community powered tourism

## INCUBATORS & SUPPORTING INSTITUTIONS

bHive™

FairCoop  
the Earth cooperative for a fair economy

Enspiral

FreedomCoop



CooperativeNetworks

Seed.coop

## DATA CO-OPS



DarkPeak

GiSC

MIDATA

Data Commons Cooperative

ourdata  
coop

## CONSULTING

## FOOD



## HOME SERVICES



## MARKETPLACE



## MUSIC

res( )nate

## CONSULTING

GILDEDSPLINTERS

SMart

## FINANCE



ECONOMIC

SPACE

AGENCY

anyshare

## GOVERNANCE



DivvyDAO

## WEB SERVICES

digicoop

COVIV

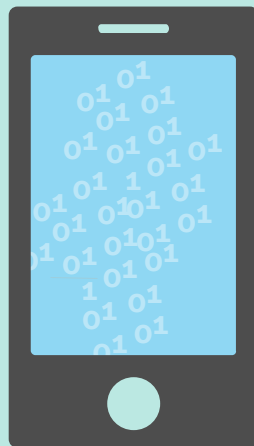
HCoop



# 4 ways to start a platform co-op (PC)

■  
**CO-OPs**  
launch  
**PCs**

■  
**Co-ops can**  
**launch PCs**  
**with the help**  
**of **UNION****



■  
**FAILING**  
**STARTUPS**  
**convert**  
**into PCs**

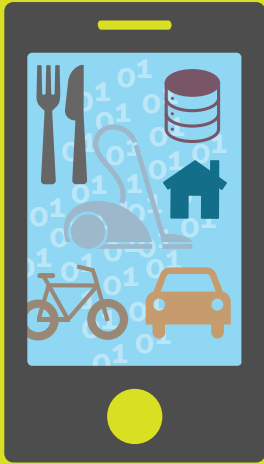
■  
**PCs can be**  
**created as a**  
**result of**  
****ANTI-TRUST****  
****REGULATIONS****

# **In order to build a fairer digital economy, we are working to overcome a series of challenges**

- Financing
- Value Proposition
- Network Effects
- Regulation
- Education
- Leadership
- Member Involvement



# Making good



Platform cooperativism is a growing international movement that builds a fairer future of work. Rooted in democratic ownership, co-op members, freelancers, technologists, and unionists create a concrete near-future alternative to the extractive sharing economy.

Building on the early promise of the Web to decentralize the power of apps, protocols, and websites, platform co-ops allow modest-income households to benefit from the shift of labor markets to the Internet. Steering clear of the belief in one-click fixes of social problems, the model is poised to vitalize people-centered innovation by joining the rich heritage and values of co-ops with emerging Internet technologies.





**LEARN MORE.  
GET INVOLVED.**

**Visit:** <http://platform.coop>

**Request information:** [info@platform.coop](mailto:info@platform.coop)

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**PUBLISHED BY:**



**SOURCES:**

"Missing Markets and the Cooperative Firm" by Brent Hueth (2014)

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"Cooperative Identity, Values & Principles" by the International Co-operative Alliance

<http://ica.coop/en/whats-co-op/co-operative-identity-values-principles>

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<https://www.uk.coop/resources/what-do-we-really-know-about-worker-co-operatives>

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<http://reic.uwcc.wisc.edu/summary/>

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Thank you to the Internet of Ownership for their support and continued work in the platform co-op space.

**DESIGN:** [idrc.ocadu.ca](http://idrc.ocadu.ca)



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